

SAMPAN



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福利改革對亞裔的影響



Bowdoin Park welfare office, Dorchester

Helping Dorchester's Refugees Find Work

New Welfare Rules End Payments for Local Vietnamese

THE SAMPAN

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Listing of available opportunities



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COVER STORY

Helping Dorchester's Refugees Find Work

New Welfare Regulations Affect Vietnamese Community

The 46-year-old immigrant sitting in the Dorchester office of the Vietnamese American Civic Association (VACA) is about to begin his first job in America. He'll be washing cars in Needham for \$8 an hour. The man, who wished to remain anonymous, came to the US from Vietnam in 1995 with his wife and children. Since his arrival here he has been receiving public assistance from the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), but those benefits were set to be discontinued on December 1, when his new two-year limit was set to expire.

Passage of the 1995 Massachusetts welfare reform law and the 1996 federal Welfare Reform Act have led to dramatic changes in the way cash assistance is distributed to low-income families in the state. Under the reforms, people are now only eligible to receive public assistance for two years within a five-year period. Moreover, those who receive assistance must also work part-time while they are receiving benefits.

In recent weeks the Dorchester father of five has been attending a VACA job-assistance program for people who are about to be dropped from the welfare rolls. Funded by the DTA, the program escorts clients to job interviews and includes a 15-hour class to develop job-search skills.

Helping the Vietnamese immigrant population in Dorchester find jobs hasn't been easy, say social service workers involved in helping them make the transition from welfare to work. "It's really hard," says Xuan Bai, the VACA program's case manager. "Right now we have 20 people in our program. Only five have a job."

"People are still in their dream," says VACA caseworker Phuong-Mai Nguyen, who adds that some recipients don't want to accept the fact that their benefits are about to end.

A number of factors contribute to the difficulties welfare recipients face as they turn from welfare to work, including limited English skills, lack of work experience in the US, worries about child care, and lack of confidence in their ability to function in the workplace. Moreover, some recipients have become dependent on welfare and are no longer eager to find jobs. Of the many welfare recipients eligible for the VACA program only a handful have consistently showed up, says one caseworker.

Many of the Vietnamese who have been receiving welfare in the US had traumatic experiences before their arrival here. The father of five, for example, served in the South Vietnamese army during the Vietnam War and was jailed when the North Vietnamese invaded the South. He spent four-and-a-half years as a political prisoner, then worked as a farmer following his release. Sponsored by a friend to come to this country, he has been living in Dorchester and receiving welfare since his arrival in the US.

When he first arrived here he received \$850 a month in benefits, but that amount was eventually reduced to \$672 a month after his wife began working part-time as a stitcher in a garment factory. He says he pays \$850 per month in rent.

While he says he would like to work in the US, he says he worries that his limited English skills (he has taken two, three-month English courses since his arrival) will hurt his job prospects. He says he is also concerned that he and his wife won't have enough time to spend with their children - aged 7 to 23 - if both of them are always working. Two of his children are now attending city high schools and one is attending Fisher College, he says.

Bai says that finding a job for men tends to be easier because their English skills are generally better and most of them can drive to a job if public transportation isn't available. But finding jobs for women who have been receiving welfare is often more complex, particularly if they are single mothers.

Another welfare recipient who is scheduled to lose her benefits soon is a 46-year-old mother of four who has been receiving assistance since 1984. Recently Bai took the woman to the Marriott Hotel in Copley Square to interview for a housekeeping job, but the woman wasn't accepted because her language skills were too limited. Also,

she was unable to work the second shift and couldn't drive.

The most difficult people to help are single parents, says Bai. "It's hard to motivate them," she says. "In their culture the women stay home."

The woman, who wished to remain anonymous, left Vietnam by boat with her 7-year-old child and two younger brothers. She made it to a refugee camp in Malaysia and eventually came to Louisiana as a refugee. She tried to get her former husband to sponsor her to come to the US, but he was unwilling to help her because he had remarried since arriving in the US in 1975.

After her arrival in the US she had three more children (aged 6, 8, and 10) by different fathers. The fathers, however, have not been providing support for their children.

The woman, who currently receives \$290 in food stamps and \$600 in cash assistance, says she was supposed to lose her cash benefits Dec. 1, but has received an eight-week extension. She says she's been trying to find a job but has neither work experience nor a driving license.

Bai suggests that people receiving public assistance in the Dorchester Vietnamese community include people who have genuine needs as well as those who have been taking advantage of the system. "You don't really know who really needs welfare and who doesn't," she says. Single mothers are generally the people who have a genuine need for welfare support, she adds, but "for other people I think they should go back to work."

The ongoing changes that are forcing people off the welfare rolls in record numbers originated with the signing of a welfare reform law by Gov. William Weld in 1995. At the time the bill was signed there were reportedly 102,993 families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children; in December, however, that number had been reduced to 58,961.

While a booming economy has apparently contributed to the decline, changes in regulations governing the distribution of cash assistance appears to be the biggest factor in the decrease. Under the new regulations, families are only eligible for Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children for two years within a five year period. Extensions beyond the two-year cutoff will also be granted to some recipients who are working but not earning sufficient income, as well as recipients who have been unable to find work despite making a good-faith effort to find a job.

Also exempt from the two-year cutoff are families with disabilities; families who care for a disabled person; women in the last 120 days of pregnancy; families in which the youngest child is under age 2; teen parents who are attending school full time, a GED program, or a training program; and people 60 or older.

Under the new regulations, people who are receiving cash assistance will also be required to work 20 hours in a paying job or in a community service job. Recipients will be allowed to keep the first \$120 of their monthly earnings, plus one-half of the balance before deductions are made in their payments.

Teen parents or teens who are pregnant must either attend a school or GED program full time while they are receiving cash assistance. Those who fail to meet these educational requirements will have their benefits reduced and eventually eliminated. Most teens receiving cash support are also required to live with parents, an adult, or in a structured setting.

Transitional child care may also be provided to recipients for up to one year after their cases have been closed. The DTA will also provide families with help in finding work, including programs such as the one currently available through VACA.



DTA social worker Misen Chau has been keeping the Vietnamese community of Dorchester informed of new welfare regulations.

Vietnamese refugees have been coming to the US since the 1970s, with 5000 to 6000 now living in Dorchester, which now has the state's largest Vietnamese community. Programs offering cash assistance for refugees provided 36 months of cash assistance in the early 1980s, but provide only eight months now for refugees without families, reflecting a trend to encourage people to become self-sufficient as soon as possible. Those who have families immediately enter the DTA system and are limited to two years of assistance, like other recipients.

Phuoc Cao, acting director of the Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants, believes that welfare reform is a positive development because its goal is to help make people self-sufficient. Moreover, he adds, the changes should make it more difficult for people to "manipulate the system." He says MORI records show that 63 percent of refugees who receive eight-months of cash assistance and do not receive DTA services are able to become self-sufficient within one year of their arrival in the US.

A key player in the Vietnamese community's ongoing effort to help people adapt to the new welfare regulations is Misen Chau, a social worker at the DTA's Bowdoin Park office in Dorchester. In recent years, Chau has organized numerous conferences and training programs to help people in the Dorchester community prepare for the changes. "A lot of people don't believe the welfare reform is a real one," he says. "In the last three years we spent a lot of time. We tried our best to send out the information."

"We ask people to take a step to become independent," says Chau, who believes that a support system is in place for most people to ease the transition from welfare to work. Child care and Medicaid, for example, will continue to be available to people for a year after they find work. The DET has also been steering clients to employment services and job-training programs.

Chau says the Bowdoin Park office currently has 2,796 families receiving assistance, including 616 who are Asian (529 of whom are Vietnamese). He says that of the 2,796 families currently receiving benefits, 273 are scheduled to lose their benefits soon because their two-year eligibility period is about to expire. Of the 273 about to lose their benefits, 65 are Vietnamese.

Chau believes that helping people enter the work force is a positive development. "I believe it's a good thing for the Vietnamese community because when you come to a new country you should adopt to a new culture," he says.

Chau says it's important for Vietnamese children to see their parents working in the US. "You have to be role model," he says, adding, "You come here not for yourself."

At the same time, Chau says he recognizes the difficulty some people may have making the transition from welfare to work as well as some of the shortcomings of the services geared to the Vietnamese community.

He points out that the background of some clients makes it more difficult to find them jobs. Many, for example, have little education or were political prisoners in Vietnam. He also believes that more people need English as a second language courses to prepare them for the workplace.

Continued on next page

COVER STORY

Continued from page 3

"They don't really target ESL," he says of the current transition plan.

Chau also believes that the community-service component of the new welfare regulations are a burden to Vietnamese recipients who

may be better off using the time to learn English and find a job.

Vincent Yee, a career associate at JobNet, a Department of

Employment and Training program that helps DET clients find jobs, goes to Bowdoin Park every week to register people for an employment program. He says lack of English, transportation difficulties, and an unwillingness to find a job are factors that come into play in his effort to help people find work. Yee recently found one Vietnamese client a factory job at the Colehersee Co. in South Boston, but he said some people he has been trying to help are less willing to focus on their job search and tend to give excuses. "Sometimes I find a good job for them but they say, 'Today I can't go to find a job,'" he says.

Joseph Casey, director of the Bowdoin Park office, says that while "we're a little bit nervous about some of those folks who would fall through the cracks," he points out that no one thought the previous system was a good one.

Asked if many people work under the table while receiving welfare, Casey said some most likely do. "The question is, do people cheat? Of course they do," though he was quick to add that the office only investigates such cases when there is evidence that cheating is occurring.

Casey suggests that the Vietnamese population presents special problems for DET social workers. "It's a more difficult population to move into employment," says Casey. "They see us as their lifeline. They're afraid to take a chance." Unlike the Chinese, who have a mature immigrant community and economy when they arrive in the US now, the first wave of Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian refugees were less educated and were fleeing from war zones.

Casey points out that "the amount of money people receive in public assistance is bare subsistence ... At some point people are better off with any job." Working, he adds, is better for people's self esteem and improves the image they present to their children.

"It's a win win win situation even if people sometimes have to be nudged to take the first step," he says.

-Robert O'Malley

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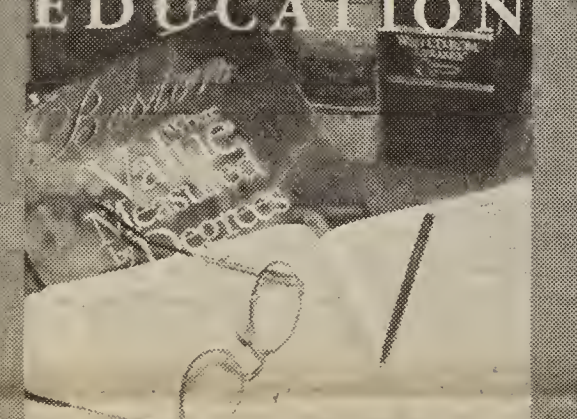
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STORIES



Filmmaker Ellie Lee at Harvard University.

(Ellie Lee is a Boston-based filmmaker who was born in Hong Kong but grew up in the South End. A graduate of Harvard University, Lee has recently received a grant to document the lives of homeless women over a three-year period. Lee's award-winning animated documentary, "Repetition Compulsion," recently appeared on PBS's POV series and was an Official Selection of the 48th Berlin International Film Festival. Her animated short, "A Look," was shown on MTV. A former teaching assistant at Harvard University, Lee is currently working on a three-minute fiction film called "Mausoleum," which takes place in Mao's Mausoleum in Tiananmen Square.)

I never thought that I would be a filmmaker. I'd always liked to draw, but it never occurred to me that you could pursue art as a profession. When I went to Boston Latin School I took some classes at the Museum of Fine Arts; they have these free after-school programs for teenage high school students.

I started working in homeless shelters while I was a freshman in college. By the time I was a junior or senior I noticed this strange pattern that all the women I was working with in the shelters were involved in really abusive relationships with men. I became increasingly frustrated that I couldn't work with them to get them the counseling they needed, to get them to the next step so they could get into a safe place emotionally and physically. Increasingly I started hearing the women confide in me these stories about how they had been sexually abused and violated or grew up with a lot of physical abuse and chaos when they were children. Before I had never kind of connected the dots. A lot of people don't think about the multitude of things that precipitate homelessness. But certainly it's been shown statistically that 79 to (I think) 87 percent of all homeless women in America have had these kinds of traumatic histories as children.

So when I started realizing this, I thought, my goodness, what can I do as an individual to sort of carry this message or make this more apparent. And naturally I just thought: film; film is the natural medium for this. And it was in my mind at the time because I was doing animation but was also coming from a photojournalistic standpoint. I had some experience doing quite a bit of still photography so I was trying to merge those interests. That's when it occurred to me that I could use film.

I did a short film my junior year about homelessness, and I just thought, this is it; this is exactly the medium I'm good in. And so senior year I embarked on a thesis about battered and homeless women. I decided at the time to do it as an animated film because I thought that that

Filmmaking With a Message

way I could protect the women's anonymity and dignity and talk about these very difficult issues in a very fresh and very innovative kind of way. Mind you this was back in '91. And I think that in 1991 even the issue of domestic violence wasn't really discussed, but it's something that seems quite cliché now. At the time, an animated documentary was also an unusual idea. But before I had a chance to finish the film [which eventually became "Repetition Compulsion"] I got into this weird car accident on Storrow Drive. My trunk opened and all my artwork fell out and was run over repeatedly by traffic in the rain. It was horrible. I had a version of it for my student film but it wasn't really finished. I lost over 600 drawings.

The kind of work I like to do isn't character animation; it's not like Disney animation. I'm more interested in finding the best way to tell the story. I like to experiment with materials. Sometimes it's animation, sometimes it's not. "Repetition Compulsion"? is all animation - about 3000 charcoal drawings. But it's also kind of a hybrid because there are documentary interviews that give it content. When I write or do things that aren't animated, I can't help but bring in other sensibilities - my animation sensibility and my documentary sensibility. So I'm always creating these hybrids.

The project I just got some funding for is a feature documentary about homeless women. My objective is to try to locate women who are on the edge of falling into homelessness and to document their lives over a period of three years. What interests me is not just their stories in the here and now but their story a year from now, and their story two years from now, so I can really kind of see the arc of their struggle.

I have to figure out a methodology to avoid exploiting the women, whether that means involving them in the editing process or something else. I worry about that and I think about it a lot. It's something I'm going to be very aware of when I go into the project. Obviously I want to empower them to tell me when to stop filming and when it's not appropriate and what questions are not appropriate. That's really key in terms of my relationship with the women. If I can't figure out a way to shoot it that's respectful, then I won't shoot it at all.

As a filmmaker I also have to figure out who's my audience. How can a present something that people normally don't want to see? Who wants to see a film about homelessness? Who wants to feel depressed? Like how can I present it in a way that's fresh so that people will feel compelled to watch because there's some sort of drama inherent in what's going on. These are human beings who in a lot of ways share similar kinds of things that you and I are going through.

It's great to make a film, but if there's no one interested in backing you up and showing your film it's kind of wasted effort.

Unfortunately there hasn't been a real explosion [in Asian American films] like there has been for Spike Lee and African American cinema.

And part of it has to do with the fact that when they do statistics they say: Well only 2 percent of the movie-going audience is Asian, whether that be Asian immigrants or first generation Asians born here. It's a very small part of the population. And that tailors the kind of work that's being made. At this time I feel like it's a little

overly self indulgent for me to make films just about being Asian American.

The first script I ever wrote was a very personal script. It's hard to describe because it's something I would never want to produce; it's something very introspective, a personal film about my family and about being Asian American and about being Chinese American, especially as an immigrant in America and what that meant. And it centered on characters loosely based on myself and my maternal grandmother. What's interesting is I felt it was important as an artist to write the script, but it's something I never really wanted to make strongly enough. I don't know what that means. I mean I feel it's very natural for all artists to do something that's very much about themselves, especially when they're 21 or 22. It's very common for a lot of my students to endeavor in self portraiture or very personal documentaries or things like that.

But I think being Asian American and being an immigrant always influence my work. Those experiences always inform my empathy for my characters. "A Look" is informed by my experience of being a voiceless woman and feeling like I had no power over certain situations when I was growing up as an immigrant. "Repetition Compulsion" is about abuse and homeless women. I myself was never abused or homeless but I can empathize with people who have no voice and are kind of powerless merely because of my experience being an Asian American immigrant growing up in a very poor neighborhood.

I'm a filmmaker but I always draw upon these experiences. I just recently saw a film about the Hollywood moguls called "Hollywoodism." It's about these Polish Jews who literally founded every major studio in Hollywood. They grew up within 500 miles of each other in Poland and they immigrated at the turn of the century and then headed out West. When they came to New York they encountered all kinds of anti-Semitism. They went out West to found these movie companies and within a few years lived within 15 miles of each other. They made films that weren't specifically about the Jewish experience but all their films were informed by their being immigrants and their being persecuted as Jews. A lot of the films before the Jewish moguls came along were from the perspective of people who were already in power, or they were films for the amusement and entertainment of the bourgeois or the very wealthy. D.W. Griffith's "Birth of a Nation" was about the Ku Klux Klan.

But the Hollywood moguls made films about the little guy trying to fight some big obstacle. Or maybe about a collection of people coming together to fight some greater evil. And what's interesting is that's kind of the archetype of what we think of as a Hollywood blockbuster film. It's the story of the little guy who has to fight against all odds to make it. But where did that come from? They said: OK, we don't have a place in America so how can we learn to make it work for us? How can we still get our ideas across in a very mainstream kind of way? So the films weren't necessarily about anti-Semitism; they weren't necessarily about being Jewish. So when I'm trying to make films, I don't want them to be so specifically about the experience of being Asian American, but I know those experiences will always inform the kind of things I do artistically.

-Interview by Robert O'Malley

CALENDAR

A Dance Concert Featuring Chu Ling and Dancers: Jan. 9, 8 p.m., at the Chinese Culture Institute's Tremont Theatre, 276 Tremont St., Boston. The concert will feature Chinese folk and classic dances by choreographer Chu Ling. In addition to Chu Ling's associated dancers, guest artists Wang Jin and Alexandra Phillips will also appear. Wang Jin is a celebrated solo dancer of the Central Ethnic Music and Dance Co. who has performed in Europe and the US. Alexandra Phillips is a modern dance artist and choreographer trained at Boston College. She is currently director of dance at Tufts University. Phillips is

distinguished by her very personal style and idiom.

An award-winning graduate of Beijing Dance Academy, Chu Ling is a strong proponent of modern Chinese dance. Before coming to the US in 1997 she was a principal choreographer and dance instructor at Guangdong Theatre of Music and Dance in China. She is now a dance instructor residing in Cambridge.

To purchase tickets, please call 542-4599 or drop by the theatre Tues.-Sat., between 9:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Tickets are \$15.

Fans: The Pomp and Circumstances: Jan.

15 through May 2, at the Peabody Essex Museum, East India Square, Salem, Tel: 978-745-1876. An exhibition of fans to illustrate colorfully and dramatically the various functions of the fan. The exhibit includes fans made in China, France, and Japan. Admission: adults \$8.50; seniors/students \$7.50; children (6-16) \$5; children 5 and under free; family rate \$20. Salem residents admitted free with ID.

The museum has also scheduled a series of gallery events on the theme of fans.

CITY

City Rejects Bid To Open Washington Street Club

The Mayor's Office of Consumer Affairs and Licensing has denied a request by Jay-Kay Boston for an entertainment license to operate a strip club on Washington Street.

The license was denied on the grounds that Jay-Kay did not provide the licensing office with accurate information about its connections to people with criminal records and ties to organized crime.

Chinatown leaders and a wide range of organizations and institutions in the Washington Street area had strongly opposed issuance of the license to operate the club, which would have been located above Liberty Book II at 640-644 Washington St. in the adult entertainment district. The proposed club would have had two stages and seated 636 people.

Members of the Chinatown community argued that issuance of the license would have led to the revival of the adult entertainment zone and increased criminal activity on the surrounding streets. In recent years, conditions on Washington Street have improved dramatically following the closing of several adult entertainment establishments on the street.

Last month, members of the Chinatown community held a lunch-hour demonstration in front of Liberty Book II to highlight their opposition to the issuance of any new adult entertainment licenses in Chinatown. Kenneth Lee, an operator of Liberty Book II, would also have had an interest in the proposed strip club.

In a lengthy decision released last month, Nancy Lo, director of the city's Licensing Division, said denial of the license couldn't be

attributed to "any one piece of information," but was "a result of the overall picture provided by all available information." She said the licensing division has "no confidence in this applicant's willingness to adhere to the public safety standards."

In her decision, Lo said the overall picture could be summarized as follows:

"1. The proposed manager of the applicant, Anthony Russo, who is also an officer and director of the applicant corporation, has a history of affiliation with individuals and businesses associated with organized criminal activities.

2. The applicant did not disclose that a separate corporate entity, Joe P. Enterprises, Inc., was addressed at their premises.

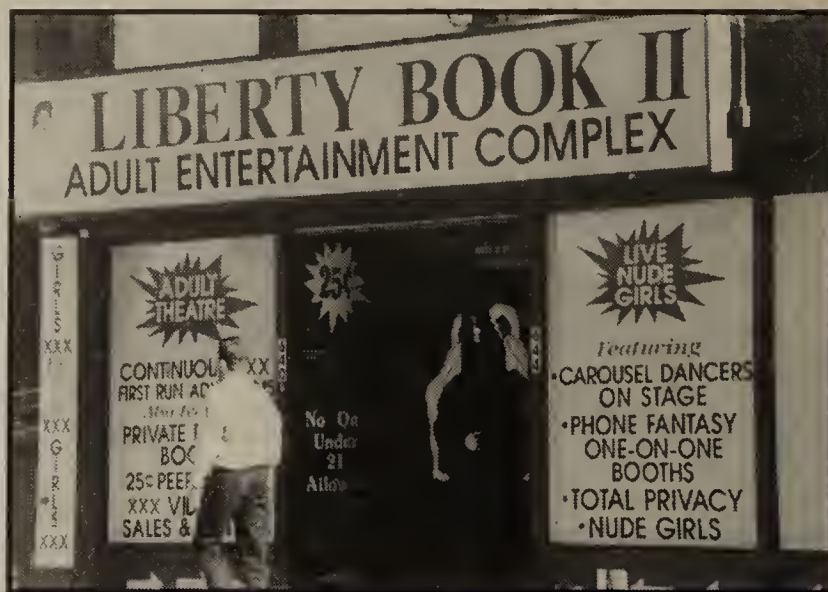
3. Joseph N. Palladino, sole officer and director of Joe P. Enterprises, Inc., also has a management and ownership role in the applicant.

4. Joseph N. Palladino has a criminal record for the crime of tax evasion.

5. Joseph N. Palladino has a criminal record for knowingly using the mails to transmit nonmailable matter containing obscene, lewd, lascivious, indecent, filthy, and vile materials.

6. Joseph N. Palladino has a history of affiliation with individuals and businesses associated with organized criminal activities.

7. The applicant also answered a question regarding illegal activity on their application incorrectly, in that they answered Question 8 as 'no', when a 'yes' answer would have been war-



The city's Licensing Division denied Jay-Kay Boston an entertainment license to operate a strip club above Liberty Book II on Washington Street.

ranted considering the above.

8. The applicant refused to disclose their shareholders."

Lo said the applicant's affiliation with people with past criminal histories raises the question "of the applicant's willingness to cooperate with authorities and thus adhere to necessary standards." She said a major factor in the Licensing Division's rejection of the application was the "continuing willingness shown by this applicant to misrepresent and fail to disclose relevant information."

She said the Licensing Division concluded that Jay-Kay's failure to disclose relevant information was motivated by a "desire to conceal information which would prove harmful to their application."

The applicant has 60 days to appeal the decision, according to Lo.

-R.O.

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Human Rights in China

By Xu Wenli

(Xu Wenli is a leading Chinese dissident and human rights activist who was arrested by the Chinese government on Nov. 30 for his role in organizing and trying to register an opposition party in China. In recent weeks, the Chinese Government has sentenced four democracy activists to long prison terms. Last month, Xu, a veteran of the Democracy Wall movement of 1978-79, was sentenced to 13 years for attempting to establish the China Democracy Party. Xu was charged with "attempting to overthrow state power" and endangering state security." Qin Yongmin, another Democracy Wall activist, was sentenced to 12 years on the same charges. Wang Youcai, a participant in the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, was sentenced to 11 years for attempting to overthrow state power. Also sentenced last month was Zhang Shanguang, who received 10 years for talking to a reporter about farmers' protests.

Xu submitted the following paper to the China Strategic Institute shortly before his arrest. It was translated by his daughter, Xu Jin, a graduate student at Boston University. For information on Xu Wenli contact Ms. Xu at 969-8635.)

At this moment, the most important platform for China's democracy movement is the human rights issue. Under the leadership of the CCP, China has a terrible human rights record. Therefore, this issue must be stressed in the overall move to bring democracy to China. Now, through the help and pressure of the international community, the CCP has recognized that human rights is a very serious problem, which has at times caused China to "lose face" and damaged its international image. But the basic attitude of the CCP is still to evade responsibility for these abuses and even continue to cover up the extent to which it violates the civil and political rights of its own citizens. I think it is time that the CCP change this attitude and their outdated approach.

In order to explain the gravity of the human rights problem in China, I will cite some of the most important human rights abuse cases. First, the biggest case of human rights abuse is that of Mr. Zhao Ziyang. Unfortunately, this case has been neglected by foreign governments, world opinion, and even by the Chinese democracy activists in China and abroad. A possible reason for this neglect of Mr. Zhao's plight is that he was former leader of the CCP. Therefore his case of human rights abuse wins no sympathy. I disagree with this reasoning. We know that Mr. Zhao's personal freedom is more restricted after issuing a letter he wrote to the CCP's 15th Party Congress calling for re-evaluating the June 4th incident.

In this incident, Mr. Zhao stands on the side of the people and is still insisting on this correct position about the 1989 student movement. From this point of view, his character and courage deserve our admiration, no matter what wrongs he had committed or what shortcomings he possessed before his mistreatment. Also, if such a person like Zhao can regain his freedom of speech and action, the political and economic reforms are expected to be pushed forward. In light of these two points, I personally hold that the case of Mr. Zhao is the biggest case of human rights abuse in China. We should show more concern for him, and the western countries should engage in a dialogue with the Chinese government about Zhao's human rights condition.

Second, we should fight for the early release of

prisoners of conscience like Sun Weibang, Liu Xiaobo, Hu Shigen, Gao Yu, Liu Nianchun, Chen Lantao, and all other political prisoners, including those in Tibet and Xinjiang. Sun Weibang, a veteran democracy activist, had been jailed after participating in the Democracy Wall movement. After the Tiananmen Movement, he was sentenced for 12 years as a result of an unfair trial. Sun is still serving his term. The religious prisoners are often neglected by the people. In fact, this problem is very serious. They were sentenced for "counter-revolutionary offenses" for their ordinary religious activities. Now, the "counter-revolutionary offenses" have been abolished, but this has not resulted in any kind of review of the cases of those sentenced as "counter-revolutionaries." All these political prisoners should be released. The Chinese government should promise not to hand out these kind of sentences in the future.

Third, we should further urge the CCP to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights without any attached conditions or strings. After the signing and ratification of this covenant, the Chinese government should act in compliance with the stipulations. I hope that the CCP will not attach any strings to enforcing the covenant, such as emphasizing that China has its special national conditions. As a matter of human rights, there are no special conditions. We cannot say that Chinese are different from any other country in terms of human rights. All nations are made up of human beings, and its political leadership should follow the same standards in protecting the rights of its citizens. The international community and Chinese democracy activists should monitor the behaviors of the CCP in accordance with the Covenant, and criticize the CCP if it fails to implement the Covenant.

Fourth, we should push for reevaluating the 1989 Tiananmen Square democracy movement or June 4th Incident. The reevaluation of the incident need not be bestowed as a favor by anybody. Rather, it demands that the CCP alter the wrong conclusion arrived at and make a public apology to the dead and their relatives for the June 4th massacre. The government should compensate for the victims and their family members.

Action Plan: Urging the CCP to Take Concrete Steps

Now, the CCP and Jiang Zemin have arrived at a propitious time for carrying out comprehensive political and economic reforms. Though there are still some problems with economic reform, the Chinese economy is recovering and developing; the domestic political environment is relatively stable. In spite of the fact that China is often severely criticized for its human

rights record by other countries, relations with other nations are rather stable and productive. There are some territorial disputes with, for instance, Japan concerning the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, and with the Southeast Asian countries regarding the Spratly Islands; but these problems are not as serious as before. Therefore, the timing and opportunity are excellent for pushing through comprehensive and far-reaching political and economic reforms. In light of this situation, I would suggest pressing the CCP to take the five following initiatives:

1. Giving Zhao Ziyang his personal freedom and right to free speech. The current CCP leadership should engage Mr. Zhao as senior advisor so that he can give full play to his wisdom and contribute to China's political and economic reforms. This will not shake Jiang Zemin's present position; on the contrary, it will improve his image.
2. Releasing political prisoners and other prisoners of conscience.
3. Reevaluating the Tiananmen Incident of 1989. Currently, the domestic and inter-

national environments are relatively stable. The CCP should know how to judge the hour and size up the situation by reevaluating the Tiananmen Incident of its own volition, affirm the greatness of the movement, apologize to the relatives of the dead, and compensate them for their losses. During the Tiananmen Movement, the citizens of Beijing and the students acted very peacefully and rationally; indeed, they deserve the Nobel Prize for their doings.

4. From the point of view of the economy, the CCP has decided to shift to a market economy and go further down the road of reform. This decision is right. Of course, we know that the market economy will not solve all problems facing China, but this course commits China to the continued openness to the outside world, economically and politically, which is a step in the right direction. However, we hope the CCP will not be perfunctory, but will earnestly carry out a complete and comprehensive reform including political reform. If CCP can do this, it would be a great blessing for the Chinese people. Political reform should go forth step-by-step, not by taking one step forward, and then two steps backwards.

5. Under the present circumstances, there are some political reforms that are easy to carry out. For example, the government should relax the controls on free speech and guarantee that nobody will be persecuted for expressing different views.

(This is part two of a two-part article by Xu Wenli. In part one, which appeared in the Dec. 18, 1998 Sampan, Xu discussed the state of democracy in today's China. To read part one go to the Sampan Online Magazine at www.aaca-boston.org/logo.htm)



A farmer transporting his sugarcane harvest in China's Guangdong Province.

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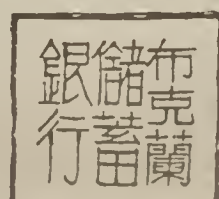
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第二點，繼續釋放政治犯、良心

第三點，重新評價「六四」的問題，現在國際國內的形勢相對比較穩定，中共若能審時度勢，主動地重新評價「六四」，肯定「六四」的偉大意義，向「六四」死難者家屬謝罪，賠償一切損失。由此而引起的社會震盪，將會是最小的。

第四點，在經濟領域方面，中共經過十五大，已決心走向市場經濟，並進一步改革的這條路。這一點是對的，當然我們也知道，不是市場經濟就可以解決一切問題，但是這種和世

民主事業起了巨大的推動作用。以他們的表現，完全應該得到「諾貝爾和平獎」。

第五點，在目前的形勢下，這種改革中非常容易做到的，那就是放寬言論自由，而且確保不因發表了不同意見而受到迫害。

後記：以上這些談話發表出來，是為了聽取海內外民主運動的朋友們的批評和建議，希望和你們進一步探討並交換意見，協商對策，以利並肩為中國民主事業奮鬥。

大陸的民主運動

徐文立與《路透社》駐京記者

艾伯樂先生的談話記錄稿

(續上期)

艾伯樂：第三次共和的特色是民主憲政的？

徐文立：『第三共和』特別強調保障人權自由，這次共和提倡的民主甚至有些不同於孫中山先生當年提出來的三民主義，因為三民主義其中的一個非常重要的主義是民族主義。當今，應該說在中國的整個版圖之內，不是說不存在著民族問題，但基本上已不是最主要的矛盾衝突，孫中山先生當時他面對的是一個滿清政權，所以當時他提出民族主義是有道理的。但是到了今天，依然沒有變化，沒有發展地看這個問題是不夠。現在的民主共和應該特別注重保障人權自由，所以某種意義上說，今天的民主可以叫作『人權民主』。不知道我這樣一個概念準確不準確。這個社會特別注重保障人權的基本權力，這個權力指的是各個方面，而不僅僅像中共所說的現在主要是要保障生存權，這個權力是廣泛的，這個權力是與生俱來的，是天賦人權，是任何人、任何政治力量無權剝奪的。當然了，任何一個社會是要有管理的，需要法治，民主社會的一個基本特徵，是法治，只要法律規定不允許從事的事情，那麼民眾要加以遵守，特別是以不妨礙他人的自由為前提。它不是無政府主義的，不是無序、放縱的。

第四點，為什麼提『重慶憲政民主』呢？其實民主的本身就是講究法治，這是民主的應有之義，但是在這個地方，為什麼要突出一下憲政呢？因為一個民主社會很重要的特徵和內容是憲政，它由一系列的母法、子法和法規來保障任何人、任何政黨都必須按照人民和議會制訂的憲法和法律來進行它的活動。為什麼提重慶呢？那就是因為現在中共領導下的並非沒有憲法，他們也曾經制訂過好幾部憲法，憲法當中也規定了人民有言論、集會、結社、示威、出版等自由，有選舉和被選舉的自由，只不過沒有兌現罷了。目前不謀求改變現有的憲法，只要求他們兌現言論、選舉、出版、結社等自由，現在可以提出這樣的要求，但是對於未來社會這個憲法就顯得非常的陳舊了，因為它當中還有什麼堅持四項基本原則等等這樣的內容。所以未來的那個憲政和現在已經有的憲法是兩回事，那是民主社會的憲政，那是新的憲法指導下的一個法律體系，所以我用了一個『重慶』。但是目前階段，我們可以首先提出要求中共兌現他們所制訂的那個憲法當中規定的言論、出版、集會、結社、示威、選舉和被選舉等等自由。

艾伯樂：現在至少要執行憲法當中的那些關於自由的規定？

徐文立：對。我現在所講的是未來社會的問題，還沒有談到現在的的問題，是順便談一談。以上就是我認為我們要實現的四個主要目標。那麼，我們的行動原則是什麼呢？我們要實現這些目標，我們應有一些行為規範，我個人認為，這也是許多朋友的共識，那就是：『公開、理性、和平即非暴力』。第一是公開的，即要實現這些目標，是採取一種公開的方式去進行，而不是秘密的。第二是理性的，這個理性當中很重要的含義就是說，我們要從街頭政治轉移到目前憲法允許的合法的領域當中來。當然，不排除有的時候所出現的必要的街頭政治。但，不是以街頭政治為主要的活動手段。

艾伯樂：那麼天安門運動錯了嗎？

徐文立：沒有錯！天安門『六四』運動是一場偉大的運動，是中國人民有史以來最偉大的一次民主運動，它完全是必要的和正確的，在這個意義上沒有任何錯誤。但是民主社會的逐步形成，將不會以廣場式的街頭政治為主，要逐步地轉移到議會政治。在現在就要轉移到選舉人民代表的活動當中去，去爭取選舉中有民主人士入選。當然，這不是絕對的，在某種條件下，不見得就不會出現街頭政治的情況，這種情況不要說在我們中國這樣的國家，西方的民主社會也會出現街頭的遊行、示威，甚至法國的卡車司機還在高速公路上下路障，進行罷工示威，這二者之間不是衝突的，那要看當時的情形，當時的需要。我們為什麼特別強調非暴力，因為從中國辛亥革命之後的幾次大暴力產生的政權，完全是一種舊的專制的重演。鑑於這樣的歷史，我們認為暴力，依然不可能給中國帶來一個安定的、繁榮的、均富的民主社會。鑑於這樣的歷史，我們主張和平與非暴力，不希望又是過去的惡性重演，比如蔣介石把所有的軍閥打敗了，然後上台了，他本來也是跟著孫中山搞民主革命的，但是他卻成了一個獨裁者。這種軍事、高度集中的領袖人物，上台以後，不可能不獨裁，不可能不搞專制。毛澤東也一樣，這種打江山的人總覺得自己有理去獨坐江山，去當皇帝，覺得是理所當然的，包括他們的功臣也覺得是理所當然的，就應該去享受，去享有不應有的特權，所以，這種思想是要不得的，我們這些人並非沒有看到現在的這個政權有武裝力量，非常強大，我們看到了這一點，但是我們還主張用和平的非暴力的，就是因為我們不願意再重複我們前輩的許多人所犯過的錯誤，不希望再出現一個專制獨裁的社會，如果建立了一個民主的機制，那麼誰想獨裁也作不到，誰想專制也作不到。所以，這點我覺得是非常重要的，正是基於這樣一種認識，我們才追求和平的非暴力的。並非我們那麼傻，我們不懂得槍桿子很重要，也知道毛澤東曾經說過『槍桿子裏面出政權』，我們懂得的，但是我們絕對不採用這種手段，就是因為我們不想重演蔣介石、毛澤東的錯誤，不想用犧牲又換來一個獨裁黑暗的社會，希望中國將來是民主的、和平的、光明的社會。

我第三方面要談的是，我個人認為，中國大陸的民主運動目前側重重要作也可作三件事情。

第一件事情，是關於人權。因為在中共的領導下，中國大陸有很不光彩的人權記錄，侵犯人權的問題相當嚴重，所以這個問題，應該作為一個突出的問題來解決。現在在國際社會的幫助和壓力之下，中共也開始意識到，確實這個問題很嚴重，有的時候很丟他們的面子，很影響他們的國際形象，但是他們還是基本上採取一種能推就推，能拖就拖，能掩蓋就掩蓋的方法來面對這個問題。我覺得中共這種態度該改變，是到改變的時候了。

為了說明中國大陸人權問題的嚴重程度，我舉幾個最重要的人權個案來談一談。第一，如果說中國有最大的人權個案的話，那就是趙紫陽先生這個個案。很可惜，這個首案為各國政府、各國輿論界，甚至包括大陸、海外的民運人士所忽略，這可能是因為趙紫陽先生曾經是中共黨員，又是中共的領導人，所以他的入權被侵犯就覺得不那麼值得同情，我想這一點是不應該的。現在我們知道，趙紫陽先生，特別在他最近發表了致中共十五大的一封信之後，他的人身自由受到了更大的限制，最新消息傳他又將受到專案審查和進一步的迫害。應該看到趙紫陽在『六四』問題上，是站在人民這方面的，至今堅持這個正確立場。在這樣一個重大的原則問題上作為一個中共的領袖人物，能夠作到這一點，應該說是難能可貴的，有了這一點，不管他過去犯過什麼樣的錯誤，或者有什麼樣的缺點，都顯現了他值得我們欽佩的品格和勇氣。他這樣一個人，能夠獲得言論行動上的自由，對於中共進一步進行政治和經濟改革將會起到巨大的推動作用，鑑於這樣幾點，我個人認為，趙紫陽先生的人權個案，是中國最大的侵犯人權的個案。今後應加強對他的關注，希望西方願意在人權方面和中國政府對話的國家能夠關注這個問題。

第二，還有像王丹、孫維祥、劉曉波、胡石根、高瑜、周國強、劉念春、陳瀾濤等一切包括西藏、新疆地區在內的因政治、宗教信仰不同而被監禁的政治犯和良心犯。孫維祥是民主牆的老戰士，兩次入獄，『六四』後被無理判十二年，目前仍系獄中。

宗教界的良心犯，常為人所不注意，其實這個問題是非常嚴重的，僅僅因為宗教信仰的不同，和正常的宗教活動，就被視為反革命罪行。現在反革命罪被取消了，那麼，那些人被判的反革命罪是不是應該取消啊？另外，給那些正常從事宗教活動的人按上了其他許多罪名，都是錯誤的，總之，一切因政治、宗教信仰不同而被監禁的政治犯、良心犯都應該得到釋放。

艾伯樂：馬上得到釋放嗎？

徐文立：至於怎麼操作這件事，這是中共的責任。當然，能一起釋放，最好。如果他們覺得有困難，逐步地釋放這些人，也不是不可以接受的。但是應該有承諾。而且再也不要製造這種政治犯和良心犯。否則，就會在世界面前丟臉，讓侵犯人權的這個惡夢纏繞著中共。

第三，進一步地敦促中共盡早地簽署、批准《公民權利和政治權利公約》，並不附帶任何條件。

簽署、批准之後應該用這個公約來規範自己人權行為，我不希望中共簽這個約的時候還有附加條件，

強調中國的所謂特殊國情，在人權這個意義上，是沒有什麼特殊的，你能講中國人和外國人不一樣嗎？對呀，都是人類，是人類應該在人權問題上遵守同樣的標準，這不是具體的經濟問題和只限於中國自己有關的政治問題需要考慮自己的國情，只要你承認中國人和外國人都一樣是人，那麼國際社會制定的這個人權國際公約就應該無條件去遵守它。如果能夠作到這一點，中國的人權記錄將會有很大的改善。我希望中共如果真的要簽署了、批准了這個條約，會逐步地去遵守它。不遵守的時候，國際社會就會拿這個條約去批評你。包括我們中國的民主人士，也可以用這個條約去檢查政府的行為，這一點是很重要的。

第二，關於重新評價『六四』的問題，請注意，我的提法是重新評價『六四』，而不是平反『六四』，過去常用『平反』這兩個字，都是共產黨的一個發明，這個平反是居高臨下的，是從上面恩賜給下面的，不對，『六四』的重新評價不需要任何人的恩賜，只要求中共在這個問題上改變自己過去的錯誤結論和評價，是他們改正錯誤的問題，是一個重新評價的事情，在這個過程當中，至少要有『六四』的死難者和他們的親屬們！當然，僅僅謝罪是不夠的，還須賠償死難者和死難者家屬的一切損失，特別是其中老者的贍養問題，讓他們老有所養，另外關於遺孤的問題，確保死難者留下的那些孩子受到良好的教育。

第三，關於中國大陸將要面臨的全國人民代表大會的換屆選舉問題，這是我們在大陸的民主運動人士應該高度關注的問題，因為根據以往的經驗，像全國人民代表大會的這種換屆選舉，（包括下屆政府的人選），基本上就是一次『黑箱』作業，代表是從省或者是直轄市直接被推舉到全國人民代表大會去的，這個推舉的過程，被推舉的人是什麼樣的人？他沒有資格作為人民代表？他有些什麼業績？他有什麼政治主張？他將代表人民在這個大會裏起什麼作用？作些什麼事情？對於廣大的中國人民群眾來說，一概都不知道，而且這個推選的過程，中國大陸的廣大人民群眾沒有任何參與，所以根據以往的經驗，這個換屆的過程，基本上是剝奪了人民的參與權和知情權，這種作法違背它現有憲法的。所以我們應當關注這場換屆。因為這個問題已經迫在眉睫了。

下面我將談談我們大陸的民主運動的這些人採用一種什麼方式進行活動，據我知道，我們這些人基本上是採取一種『廣交友、不結社』的方式進行活動，在目前中國大陸的這種情況下，大家基本上都不追求建立什麼組織，就是所謂的不結社，在交友的過程中互相交流切磋。這可能也會成為今後民主社會中的一種行為方式。那就是每個人都是一個獨立的思想者，這些獨立的思想者根據自己的思考來提出問題，發表自己的獨立見解，盡可能發揮各自特長。當然，不排除吸收一些朋友的意見和智慧，我自己就常常這樣做。各自提出問題、各自發表意見，以這種方式對中國民主事業作出各自的貢獻。

談了以上這些，可以說，就基本上把中國大陸民主運動的面紗揭開了，讓大家知道我們是怎樣進行自己的工作，這樣也避免產生一些誤解和誤會。當然，我所說的這種方式，決不是唯一的方式，也不表示只允許這種方式，方式是可以多種多樣的。我所說的，是我觀察到的基本的行之有效的方式。

艾伯樂先生，有關中國大陸民主運動的情況我就談到這裏，我可以回答你所提的問題。

艾伯樂：徐先生，假如你是江澤民主席的顧問，你將建議他作什麼？

徐文立：謝謝你提出問題，但是我絕對不可能成為江澤民先生的顧問，我曾經是中共的階下囚，而且我現在是立足民間不同政見者，在這樣一個他位上從事著中國大陸的民主運動，所以從這個意義上說，他就是請我，我也不會去給他當顧問，何況他也不會請我。我倒是可以借此機會以一個民主運動的老戰士的身份，向他和中共中央提出五點建議：

現在中共與江澤民正面對著一個非常好的機會，盡管在經濟改革上存在著許多問題，但改革後的中國經濟正在復甦、發展，國內的政治局面相對也是穩定的，國際社會除了在人權問題上對中共批評比較嚴厲之外，出現較為寬鬆的外部環境，與周邊國家基本上不存在很大的衝突，雖然與日本有釣魚島問題，與東南亞一些國家有南沙群島問題，與有些國家的邊境線還沒有劃定，過去朝鮮戰爭有遺留問題，那比過去的問題小得多。總之，國內外較寬鬆的環境為中共得了一個可以較為徹底地進行政治改革和經濟改革的絕好時機。其實，抓住不住也就是一念之間的事。

首先我要建議他們，還給趙紫陽先生——你們黨內的一個老共產黨員，

牛頓中文學校走過四十年 從一校可看出全社區發展歷程

朱偉德

成立於一九五九年的牛頓中文學校到今年已走過了整整四十年歷程。在大波士頓地區的中文學校中，除了位於中國城內的廣教學校外，牛頓中文學校是資格最老的一家，而且是郊區的第一所中文學校。

一九九九年新年伊始，牛頓中文學校迎來了建校四十週年大慶的日子，一月三十一日，將舉行春節聯歡暨校慶活動，還準備在今年內出版一份精制的校慶專刊，以記錄學校走過的歷程。

然而，不少曾經或者正在牛頓中文學校就讀、任教或工作的學生、老師和家長，恐怕還不是十分瞭解學校的全部歷史。而牛頓中文學校的發展史又是美國中文學校歷史中的一個篇章，並作為一個獨特典範，對新老中文學校的繼續發展或創立具有啟發性。牛頓中文學校的成長，也反映了本地華人社區的變遷。

美國華人移民史告訴我們，最早來美國的華人多是台山、廣東等地的勞工，他們文化水平較低，大多居住在中國城等華人集中區，美國早期的中文學校也是為這些華子弟所設，以教台山話、廣東話為主，這類中文學校在華人較多的加州、紐約等地最為常見，波士頓華埠的廣教中文學校也已有八十年歷史。

五、六十年代來美國的華人，則有輾轉來自港台的中國大陸知識份子或富裕階層，也有較年輕的港台留學生而後逐漸定居美國。這些人多數會講國語，並具有較高教育水平，成為美國華僑中新的力量：專業人士、這些人對後代的教育也有較高要求，而且更具遠見卓識，認識到讓下一代繼承掌握祖國和民族文化的必要。因此為他們服務的中文學校也在美國各地應運而生，這類中文學校多出現在華人專業人

隨著中國大陸的改革開放，八十年代起，來自大陸的華人移民與留學生逐漸增多。但這些人在來美國初期忙於謀生求學，還不太顧得上孩子的業余中文教育，因此在九十年代初送子女上中文學校的大陸人還很少。自一九九三年起，由於一大批大陸人士獲得了「六四綠卡」，身份、就業有了保障，經濟好轉，生活安定，許多本來就受過高等教育的家長便更加關注子女們的培養教育，他們首先想到的是讓孩子學習祖國語言：中文。大陸人士們開始送孩子去中文學校，為教國語的中文學校增加了新的生源，也使傳統中文學校面臨是否增設拼音、簡體字等新挑戰。近幾年，由大陸人士創立的中文學校也在美國各地湧現，並成立了全美中文學校協會，成為華人社區一股不小的新生力量。在大波士頓乃至麻州地區，也有大陸人士創立的劍橋、世紀、北京等中文學校。

牛頓中文學校與眾不同的特點是在一所成熟的老牌中文學校基礎上向大陸型轉變，這更多是出自市場的需要而非政治的影響。該校以漢語拼音為教學工具的特長恰巧適合來自大陸的學生和家長的需要，學校只是善於抓住大陸移民大量增加的時機，並誠心為他們的需要服務，例如開設簡體字班、選用大陸出版的系統教材等，便吸引了大批大陸學生。近幾年來，該校跨出低谷，學生人數年年增長，從五年前的約七十人增加到今年的近四百人，而且還有欲罷不能的趨勢，成為本地區發展最快的中文學校之一，甚至不敢再做招生廣告，以怕學生太多招架不住。

新的形勢與發展要求學校在提高教學與管理水平上下功夫，不斷制定新政策，開設新課程，以滿足學生、家長的需要。近年來，牛頓中文學校順應局勢先後進行了數項重大改革，例如增聘高水平教師、採用系統教材、開展簡體字教學、增設文體類課程等。這幾年該校的中文與文化課教學質量大大提高，主要是因為教師素質較高，而且教學方法比較適合在美國的中國孩子，因此使許多人慕名而來。

該校現任校長李少娜表示：雖然目前牛頓中文學校來自大陸的學生佔多數，但學校的傳統方針仍是面向所有學生，在教學上也一直堅持繁簡字體並舉的方針，近兩年還增聘了若干來自港台的教師，學生中也仍有不少港台子弟以及來自其他亞洲國家地區甚至美國人的孩子。由於當前美國主流學校的中文教學大多採用國語、拼音及簡體字，所以許多家長希望孩子們學習中文能與美國學校接軌，有些粵語家庭想讓孩子學國語，也有的是學過繁體字又想讓孩子學簡體字，或者學過注音想學拼音。牛頓中文學校的教學特點在新形勢下更具吸引力，這也是該校近年發展較快的一個原因。

像其他中文學校一樣，牛頓中文學校的行政人員也是每年改選並幾乎是義務服務。這種體制有可以發揮眾人作用，培養大家奉獻精神的優點；也存在教學管理缺乏連貫性的弱點。為加強管理領導，該校幾年前重組了校董事會，以統籌監督協助校行政人員的工作，並逐漸完善教學行政人員的酬勞制度，以利最大限度地調動大家的積極性。這使該校的師資隊伍不斷壯大，教學水平不斷提高。

牛頓中文學校的董事會與校行政負責人員認識到：海外的華人社區在發展，其服務需求也在變化，尤其作為文化教育及社會服務機構，絕不能以不變應萬變，死抱著老一套不放，這勢必會在競爭中被淘汰。因此學校仍在不斷改進，例如幾年前該校開始採用中國大陸出版的「中國語文」教材，但最近發現新出版的「標準中文」教材更適合海外孩子學習，便決定從一年級起改用更新的教材。

牛頓中文學校除了具有中文教學的規範化嚴格化又適合海外兒童特點之外，其文體課程的多樣化也是個引人因素。以往該校教授傳統中國文化的課程，文的有國畫、武的有武術，都很受歡迎，但隨著學生人數的不斷增長，需求的不斷廣泛，必須開設更多的課程以滿足少兒及成人學生的要求。這幾年，每年都新設文化課班，體操、舞蹈、音樂、球類、美術、手工、數學、棋藝等五花八門，卻仍有人滿為患之勢。本學年，光兒童美術班就開了五個，分別是國畫、水彩、素描、蠟筆畫和兒童畫啟蒙班，以適合不同年齡和水平的學童需要，每班還是有二三十學生，老師們仍感到難以招架。籃球班也已從一班增加到三班，老師們努力提高文體教育的質量，不僅是讓孩子們在學習中文後換換花樣，而是真讓他們學到技能，這也是該校文體課程受歡迎的原因。

在中華語言文化教學之外，牛頓中文學校還有個特點，就是成為一個家長們聚會交流的社區中心。近年來，學校家長會的作用也越來越大，不僅組織家長們服務於學校教學，如輪流值日維持秩序等，還為家長們舉辦各種講座、播放錄像，並組織外出旅遊和舞會等。還開設了若干適合家長學習的成人課程，如交際舞、韻律操、國畫、水彩畫、老人英文班、甚至入籍班等，以致許多家長包括祖父母們甚至比孩子還愛來中文學校。

目前該校吸引著上千學生、教師、家長，現用校舍已嫌擁擠，學校正在考慮未來的發展方向。今年的春節暨校慶聯歡會就將借用較大的牛頓布朗中學禮堂舉行。正在籌備出版的四十校慶專刊也將成為學校的一份跨世紀珍貴紀念。牛頓中文學校希望透過過去四十年中曾經服務或參與該校的人士，尤其是瞭解學校某階段發展的前輩們撰寫稿件或提供信息，也歡迎社會各界尤其是中美教育界及兄弟中文學校的祝賀致詞及商家支援贊助廣告。有意提供信息或贊助，或參加牛頓中文學校一月三十一日校慶聯歡者可洽沈安平(617) 964-2937或李少娜(978) 443-0666。

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平等住房機會



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追溯美華歷史

由美華協會紐英倫分會舉辦的「天使島」圖片展覽，將於二月一日起在波士頓公共圖書館展出一個月。二月三日還將於該館舉行一整天講習會，此題為「金山入口：一段難忘旅程」的講習會，主要以教育界人士與家長為對象，配合圖片展回顧華人在美國的歷程，探討教育美國華裔學生的經驗。參加的教師可獲進修學分。詳情可聯絡 Rckder@alum.mit.edu。

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指出, 在華福利生活的亞裔中, 具體情況有很大差別。像阮先生那樣的人主要是來美國時間短, 需要提高英語和適應環境, 但他們有體力、會開車

幫助亞裔過難關

與阮先生年紀相仿的平女士經歷卻完全不同。她的丈夫在越戰結束後就來了美國並另尋新歡, 丟下了他們孤兒寡母。他們母子作為船民逃離越南, 先到馬來西亞的難民營, 後於一九八四年來到美國。她沒有再嫁人但卻有了三個小孩, 全家一直靠福利金生活。現在她的長子已二十餘歲分家單過, 而她自己不會英語, 沒有駕駛執照, 沒有工作技能與經驗, 又有從六歲到十歲的三個孩子需要照料, 找工作很困難。面對即將失去福利補助的前景, 她無能為力, 孩子們也很悲傷。

果留在越南, 孩子們沒有前途, 別說上大學, 就是連高中也讀不完; 但在美國的陌生環境中生活卻不如在祖國自在, 語言和文化的巨大障礙很難逾越, 連他的兩個大孩子在學習英語時都遇到極大困難, 正是壯年的他要靠福利金生活也是種恥辱。因此能夠找到職業開始新生活, 是值得慶賀的事。

、也能安排家務與孩子的照料問題, 因此有希望找到職業。但像平女士這樣的單身母親卻是求職中的老大難, 他們曾陪她去面試過, 她也表示只要有活干做什麼都行, 但即便像酒店清理房間、餐館打雜等工作她也難勝任, 因為她從來沒工作過, 還有孩子需要照顧。裴春認為, 在福利改革中, 對具體案例還是要區別對待, 有些老幼殘障單身母親等, 恐怕是離不開福利補助, 越美福利會及過渡協助計劃一方面要幫助鼓勵人們找到職業擺脫福利, 另一方面也會幫助確實需要者申請延長福利, 總的目的是幫助亞裔們度過難關。

在越美福利會負責過渡協助計劃的阮芬梅小姐說, 這項計劃就是過渡協助辦公室的一個項目, 該辦公室的周美森等工作人員介紹福利案例給他們來參加學習。這項免費培訓內容包括英語、基本就業常識、面試技能等, 並幫助學員聯係雇主和陪同面試, 目前在參加了學習的約二十名學員中, 已有五人找到了工作, 上述阮先生是學習班最勤奮的學員之一, 因此得

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舢舨春節專刊出版預告
下期舢舨為春節專刊, 將於一九九九年二月五日出版。歡迎來稿及惠登廣告。

到了回報。阮芬梅又指出, 但還有許多應該參加過渡協助培訓的福利享用者們沒有來參加學習, 據統計應有二百多人符合培訓資格, 但前來參加者只有約十分之一。她認為不來參加培訓的人可能有各種原因, 但都應該認識到參加培訓的必要, 為將來早作打算。

裴春和阮芬梅都是近年從越南來美國讀書就業的青年一代, 都已取得大學學歷並在工作的同時攻讀碩士學位。她們認為作為受過教育的年輕人, 都懂得靠自己的能力爭取高學位好工作是值得驕傲的事, 也絕不會依賴社會補助生活, 同時也願意幫助自己的同胞擺脫依賴找回自尊, 這正是她們工作的價值所在。她們希望通過自己的努力, 使福利改革對亞裔的影響由消極向積極的方向轉換。

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福利改革對亞裔社區的影響

朱偉德

美國的福利制度

在美國，成千上萬的人們以辛勤工作換得收入，一方面為自家生活消費創造條件，另一方面也為國家交納稅金，為社會作貢獻。然而，也有為數不少的人是在靠社會福利生活，自己不工作卻在消耗納稅人所交的稅金。當然，在享受社會福利的人中，有多種多樣的情況，有些人曾經工作納稅多年，在確實喪失了工作能力時需要社會的救濟，美國的福利制度也是這個國家尊重人權、盡可能為所有人提供生存條件的表現。但也有些社會福利金獲得者並非沒有工作能力，更有些人甚至依賴或濫用了福利制度，這使整個國家背上了沉重的負擔，也引起人們對原有福利制度的合理性的懷疑與爭議。

若干年前開始的福利改革運動，最終通過了削減和限制福利的法案。新法規從一九九六年十二月起生效，自那時起，凡已經享受或其後申請到福利者，只可以有兩年期限享受此補助，到期後則福利金停發，必須自食其力了。如今，兩年期限已到，那些靠福利補助生存者將怎樣面對新局面？這項福利改革法案對亞裔社區和新移民的影響又有多大？為此，我們走訪了位於波士頓多徹斯特區的「過渡協助部辦公室」，這是政府福利部門屬下的一個機構。

該分部主任秋·卡西先生介紹說：本機構的職責是審核那些福利案例，通知當事人還有多久福利就會被取消，並提供培訓計劃讓福利享用者們學習就業技能或英語，還幫助他們聯係工作。目的是讓許多以往靠社會福利生活的人意識到自力更生的重要，闖過過渡期的難關，找到職業，不再成為公眾負擔。由於位於多徹斯特地區，該機構的服務對象中有不少住在附近的亞裔，因此福利改革對亞裔社區也會產生一定影響。

卡西主任指出：「要瞭解福利改革的影响，應該知道些美國福利制度

封面故事

的歷史。我本人自六十年代起開始服務於社會福利機構，當時每個市鎮都有福利辦公室，主要是為失業服務，由州政府提供生活補助金等，以幫助他們解決失業期間的生活困難。後來，各州與聯邦合作提供資金，卻各有規定，對如何滿足享受福利資格的權衡因素很多，而且多年來時常變化，對申請人的限制條件也逐漸增多。他表示，以往社會福利主要用於對失業者的臨時補助、對喪失工作能力者的生活安置、災害時的救助等，補助項目有福利金、日用品、衣物或緊急救助等。

美國是個移民國家，近幾十年來亞非南美洲等發展中國家移民難民的增多，也引起福利制度的變化。尤其是來自戰亂國家地區的難民們，通常貧困無資產、文化水平低、不懂英語、缺少就業技能，許多人還有病殘，因此來到美國找不到工作就不得不靠政府救濟為生。自越南戰爭結束後的七十年代中期起，東南亞難民大批湧來美國，其中一些人成為美國社會福利的新負擔，至今在靠政府補助度日，目前的福利改革對這些人確是打擊。因此福利改革的背後也有反移民思潮的因素存在。

作為一名在此領域工作了三十餘年的人，卡西先生表示，雖然許多人都知道福利制度是項幫助人的措施，但似乎卻沒人對其滿意，有的人嫌補助太多，有的人嫌補助太少。該制度本身也確實有利有弊，漏洞不少，因此長久以來總有爭議，最終導致了福利改革。

福利改革的影响

關於福利改革對社會的影響是正是負，卡西認為：改革的目的是鼓勵人們爭取上進，以自食其力謀求更好的生活，同時減輕國家社會及納稅人的負擔，這具有積極的意義，從長遠來講也會產生好的結果。對新移民們來說，更應該瞭解靠自己的力量奮鬥、勇於開創未來，是美國的基本精神

，而依賴偷生以喪失人格卻不是美國人的品格。想在這個國家立足者，應該首先學會獨立自主，那麼生活的自立是第一步。改革法案旨在督促鼓勵人們盡可能發揮自己的能力，出發點是好的。然而，在具體執行過程中，也會有不少實際困難和問題，需要靈活運用政策幫助人們去解決，而不能不分緣由一刀切把人逼上絕路。

他還解釋道：政府為此也下了很大功夫花了不少經費，諸如開辦「過渡協助」這樣的計劃就是想讓人們早日獨立，為此投資培訓福利享用者們的就業能力，如果他們參加有關學習班或者找到了職業，還可為他們提供免費的托兒、醫療、交通等服務，讓他們解除家庭後顧之憂，安心學習或工作。另一方面，雖然聯邦的社會福利金有限期，但如果當事人在兩年之後仍找不到工作，州政府在其他補助方面會有所寬限，例如還可以申請免費醫療卡，由農業部發放的食物券也不會停止，而且還會稍有增加，例如失去三元現金補助會多得一元食品券，因此起碼還能吃有食物，維持基本生活需要。還有幾種特例可在兩年期限之外，例如完全喪失勞動能力者、有幼兒的母親或孕婦等。卡西並進一步解釋說，如果家有兩歲以下幼兒，可以從最小的孩子滿兩歲起才計算兩年福利金期限。

總結實行改革之後兩年來的情况，卡西主任認為對鼓勵人們擺脫福利還是有成效的，例如他們這個分部辦公室負責的福利救濟案例，近兩年來就已從約一千五百家下降到三百五十家左右。他還指出，盡管依靠社會福利生活的人有黑人、西語裔、也有白人，但亞裔比例卻高於其在總人口中所佔百分比，因此如何幫助亞裔尤其是新移民擺脫這種狀況是項具有挑戰性的工作。卡西先生還回憶起多年以前自己曾動員一位亞裔社會福利享用者參加職業培訓以尋找工作，那人當時因語言障礙而缺乏信心，但經過嘗試與努力他終於闖過難關，後來成為一位很有成就的專業人士，如今他也在抱怨自己辛勤工作納稅，卻在養活一些不勞而獲的福利享用者。卡西笑道：「雖然作為曾經享受福利者，在

自己狀況改善後也不應過河拆橋阻止別人享受福利，但能夠有這種上進心總是好事。另外人應該往高處走，尤其是有孩子的家長也應該為孩子們作出好的榜樣，難道你願意因終生成為公眾負擔而讓子女們在學校和社會上遭人歧視？或者模仿父母榜樣也無所事事靠救濟度過一生？」

亞裔移民與福利

問及有多少亞裔享用社會福利，卡西主任說他們這個辦公室負責的案例中，目前有百分之二十是亞裔，而亞裔中的百分之九十七以上是越南裔。為什麼越南裔享用社會福利者較多？該分部的過渡助理員周美森先生指出這與不同亞洲國家移民難民背景有關。

在亞裔移民中人數最多的華人較少有長期依賴社會福利的，周美森認為這是因為無論來自中國大陸還是台灣香港的華人，要麼是親屬移民來美國後有靠山，要麼是留學生畢業人士能夠找到工作謀生，而且華人們的一般教育水平較高或具有不同就業技能，又比較勤奮，善于靠自己的勞動來換取美好生活，不習慣成為社會的寄生蟲，甚至來自越南的華裔都有同樣品德。因此華人通常在美國靠自己努力發達較快，用不著依靠政府補助。

但來自東南亞地區的難民則經歷完全不一樣，在多年戰亂中，人們的身體精神飽受摧殘，大多數人沒有機會受到良好教育，甚至在祖國都沒有機會工作就業，許多人還在戰爭中受過傷或曾被關過多年監獄，健康狀況很差。周美森介紹說，一九七五年美軍撤兵越戰結束之後，美國從七十年代中後期起開始接收東南亞難民的計劃。一九七八至一九八零年，是越南難民潮的第一高峰，後來難民範圍又擴大到柬埔寨、寮國等受戰亂影響的印度支那國家。八十年代初期，美國各地的東南亞難民都在增加，直到今天，仍有許多逃離祖國的東南亞人住在第三國的難民營中等待獲得來美許可，每年也仍有一定數量的難民獲準來美國。

這些難民來到美國之後，許多人因語言障礙、教育水平低、缺乏工作技能、健康狀況差、或有幼兒需要照顧等原因而無法找到工作，還有許多家庭不全的孤兒寡母，便成為社會福利依賴者。多徹斯特區是大波士頓越南裔集中的一個地區，估計有上萬越南裔居民，因此前來該分部申請福利的越南人數也較多。據介紹，過渡協助計劃在波士頓地區有五個類似的辦公室，人們可以就近申請，每個分部因附近居民成份差異，申請人的種族比例也會有變化。例如住在北岸區的居民可以到瑞弗爾(River)分部去申請，而那里住有較多的柬埔寨裔，因此該分部經手的亞裔案例中柬埔寨比例就較高。周美森認為，總體來說，越南裔難民依賴社會救濟的程度有相似之處，但因為越南難民在所有東南亞難民中人數最多，所以從全美範圍來說靠社會福利生存的越南人數也最多，因此使越南裔成為受福利改革影響最大的族裔群之一。



周美森在多徹斯特的過渡協助部辦公室樓前

技能、健康狀況差、或有幼兒需要照顧等原因而無法找到工作，還有許多家庭不全的孤兒寡母，便成為社會福利依賴者。多徹斯特區是大波士頓越南裔集中的一個地區，估計有上萬越南裔居民，因此前來該分部申請福利的越南人數也較多。據介紹，過渡協助計劃在波士頓地區有五個類似的辦公室，人們可以就近申請，每個分部因附近居民成份差異，申請人的種族比例也會有變化。例如住在北岸區的居民可以到瑞弗爾(River)分部去申請，而那里住有較多的柬埔寨裔，因此該分部經手的亞裔案例中柬埔寨比例就較高。周美森認為，總體來說，越南裔難民依賴社會救濟的程度有相似之處，但因為越南難民在所有東南亞難民中人數最多，所以從全美範圍來說靠社會福利生存的越南人數也最多，因此使越南裔成為受福利改革影響最大的族裔群之一。

周美森強調說：「目前教育這些靠社會福利生存的亞裔認識面對的危機是項緊迫的任務，我們通過與社區領袖及機構合作、舉辦講座等形式來宣傳福利改革，讓人們認識到失去福利的危險，鼓勵他們參加英語班、職業培訓等，以便找到合適的工作。但許多新移民難民由於從來沒在美國工作過，有種畏懼不敢去嘗試就業，另外還存在僥倖心理，仍不相信會一下失去福利，混一天算一天。這種心態是我們工作的主要障礙，我們希望社

期限到後的前景

靠社會福利生活的亞裔們如何對待福利改革後的形勢呢？在多徹斯特的越裔福利會，我們會見了兩位享用社會福利的越裔，他們的福利補助都應在一九九八年底前停發，將來的前景如何？他們分別講述了自己的故事與打算。

四十六歲的阮先生三年多前攜全家來到美國。在越南時，他因為越戰時當過政府軍士兵，在越共的監獄中蹲了近五年，後來在鄉下務農，沒有什麼職業技能，文化程度也不高，英語更是一竅不通。來到美國之後，夫婦兩都找不到工作，又有五個孩子要養活，只好申請社會福利，全家每月約有八百多元的福利金。後來他妻子有了份半職的縫紉工作，福利補助便減少到六百餘元，收入僅夠付房租的，生活非常艱難。他希望能夠找到工作，靠自己的力量養家糊口。他參加了越裔福利會舉辦的過渡協助培訓計劃，在該計劃的幫助下，目前阮先生已找到一份清洗汽車的工作，新年開始就上班。他很高興能開始自食其力的新生活。他的大女兒目前已是費舍學院的大一學生，老二和老三都在上高中，最小的孩子已七歲了。對比在越南與美國的生活，他表示，來美國最好的地方是孩子們能受到教育，如

節日購物

波士頓市於一九九八年聖誕期間再度開展節日購物活動，這項由主街計劃主辦、富利銀行贊助的促銷宣傳，有市區數百家商店參與，起到繁榮節日市場作用。圖為曼寧諾市長與富利銀行約翰·哈米爾在華埠麗禮古玩店購物時與業主陳毓璇夫婦合影。

市政府再次拒絕發新色情業執照

(本報訊)波士頓市長消費者活動與執照辦公室於一九九八年十二月二十三日發出決定通知，拒絕了打算在中國城華盛頓街六四零到六四四號開業的JAMES成人娛樂舞廳的娛樂執照申請。

該辦公室在十一月二十三日於中國城舉行了社區聽證會後，又對該業主申請進行了多方面的審察，權衡各方利弊做出了拒絕頒發牌照的決定。這份由消費者與執照辦公室主任羅燕玲簽署的長達九頁的決定書，分析了成人娛樂舞廳的開業可能對周圍產生的交通、治安、健康危害，及對其他商業與居民的不利影響，並證明申請人在提供物產擁有權與生意股東證據時有誤導，而且該業的主要管理人員有犯罪記錄。以此駁回了JAMES的開業申請。

這個決定對參加了十一月二十三日聽證會和十二月十五日的華埠社區反對色情業卷土重來的示威游行的民眾，無疑是巨大的鼓勵，大家的意見得到重視，鬥爭取得了勝利。十二月十五日中午的示威在華盛頓街自由二成人書店前舉行，該棟樓宇也是準備開業之處。除了華埠社區的許多社團和居民前來參加，更有不少主流社會的美國人以及政府職員以行動表示支持徹底取消此處的成人娛樂區。

正在興建的千年大廈的開發集團負責人帶領近二十名員工到場參加示威，他表示：千年大廈投資巨大，兩年後竣工時內中將有購物中心、電影院等娛樂設施，以及高級住宅樓，如果一街之隔便有成人娛樂業這種危害治安的不健康行業，對千年大廈的形象與生意必然有很大負面影響。他們之所以選擇這塊地方投資，是相信此地的環境會得到改善，因此與社區一起爭取在此地徹底消除色情行業，是該集團義不容辭的責任。



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